

**Council on Greenways & Trails**  
**(Delaware's Recreational Trail Advisory Committee)**  
**February 4, 2009**  
**Department of Agriculture, Dover, DE**

Welcome & Introductions

Ms. Diane Wilson, acting Council Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. She asked members and visitors present, to introduce themselves, give a background and identify their agency's representation.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Ms. Wilson asked for a motion to accept the October 29, 2008 minutes as written. Charles Emerson moved and James Ireland seconded to approve the minutes, motion passed.

Education & Outreach

National Trails Day on June 6, 2009 is the first event for the Education Outreach program. This partnership event is spearheaded by the American Hiking Society. Their website has more information or to register an event: [American Hiking](#). Typically, trail related activities are held throughout the state, such as hiking, bike rides, bird watching, and trail maintenance. Delaware State Park Interpreters also plan activities.

Delaware State Parks website launched a new look, design and information. It is also seeking edits for clarification and additional information [Delaware State Parks](#).

Equine Community

Peggy Koster serves as the Equine Council's Vice Chairwoman and Chair of its Trail Committee. The Equine Council's mission is to promote, protect and enhance the keeping of equine in Delaware. It has been a non-profit volunteer unit since 1990 and can be found on the WWW. The Council works with the DE Dept. of Agriculture and coordinates trail matters with DNREC's Parks & Recreation, Fish & Wildlife and DDA Forestry.

The Council takes seriously good land stewardship, working with schools and horse enthusiasts to sustain this value. It participates in the Delaware State Fair and typically sets up for ten days. However, this year, due to budget constraints the Equine Council may reduce its Fair involvement.

Mountain Biking

Jim Ireland serves as President for the Delaware Trail Spinners, a mountain biking organization focused on shared-use, trail planning and construction, responsible trail riding and mountain biking education. The Spinners work with Delaware State Parks,

New Castle County's Dept. of Special Services (Parks), and the Fair Hill Natural Area (Maryland) helping build and maintain sustainable trails. The Spinners regularly volunteer for trail maintenance projects and have volunteered for Delaware State Park's Trail Watch Program.

The Trail Spinners offer programs such as outreach mountain biking courses held once a month at White Clay Creek and weekly rides at Fair Hill. The objective is to bring people into the sport of mountain biking and in-school physical education classes on mountain biking. An invitation was extended to Council for an easy riding course at White Clay Creek State Park.

Trail Spinners and the Delaware State Park Trail Crew are regularly removing illegal Technical Trail Features built in White Clay Creek State Park.

Friends of White Clay Creek State Park have reported trail conflicts between hikers and mountain bikers in the Park. No other trail users have logged similar complaints. Susan Moerschel is reviewing the Rapid Assessment Visitor Inventory (RAVI) survey method to reach trail users and determine conflict reality.

#### ATV

David Bartoo and the ATV community had discussions about their riding illegally in the State Parks. The ATV community said they had asked DelDOT's Planning Office to make available unused property for them to ride. A DelDOT owned property adjacent to the Clayton-Easton rail line was visited and found to be too small for ATV use. Illegal ATV riding continues to be a problem at Blackbird State Forest and in Fish & Wildlife Areas.

#### Bicycle Council

Mike Krumrine is DNREC's representative to the Bicycle Council and he shares information from them. More people are using bicycles for recreational means and as a mode of transportation to and from work. Governor Markell, an avid cyclist, brings excitement to Council about future prospects for cycling in the state. New committees were recently established to promote more off-road and recreational trails throughout the state and to support more bike-friendly businesses. Educating bicycle users is a continuous process because some cyclists do not adhere to traffic rules. Bicycle friendly communities are encouraged.

Council will host an all day Bicycle Summit at DelTech, Terry Campus in Dover on April 24, 2009. Enthusiasts within and out of Delaware, including civic leaders, politicians and business people will gather to brainstorm on the direction bicycle activities are headed in Delaware and whether there will be future legislation. Jennifer Baldwin and Anthony Aglio are the Summit's planners.

#### State Forest Trails

Austin Short gave a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the trail system in DE State Forests. There are three state forests offering somewhat primitive recreation.

- Blackbird State Forest in New Castle County is 5,400-acres with ten land tracts, an environmental educational center and 45-miles of trails with internal access roads that can be used as trails.
- Taber State Forest in Kent County is 1,300-acres with a one-3-mile trail and no facilities. It is the most primitive with limited use of half crop and half forest land.

- Redden State Forest in Sussex County is the largest with 11,000-acres and 17 tracks. There are 6-miles trails, 1.5-miles of educational trail, an environmental education center and 38 miles of internal access roads that can be used as trails.
- There is no charge to use the forest trails and campsites but there is a charge for the Redden lodge.

#### Delaware State Park Trails

David Bartoo updated on several trail planning and construction projects in State Parks.

- Burton Island Trail, located at Delaware Seashore State Park is under construction. Sections of existing wetland boardwalk must be reconstructed and portions of trails through sensitive habitat in the Nature Preserve must be closed. Environmental consideration was foremost in the design and construction of this trail because it traverses wetlands and Nature Preserve lands. Trail reconstruction is funded by the Recreation Trails Program.
- Thompson Island Preserve, located at the northern shores of Rehoboth Bay and the Lewes & Rehoboth Canal is in design to make the site more accessible. As this site holds high cultural resource significance, the trail design must be sensitive to both cultural and natural resources. Federal Recreation Trail funds are earmarked for construction.
- The trails in Fresh Pond, constructed in 2007, are part of Delaware Seashore State Park, located east of Ocean View. A new parking lot accommodating equestrian trucks and trailers was built to access the 3.3-mile trail. The site and trail can be accessed from the bike/ped lane on Route 1 with a connection made to Fred Hudson Road. Part of the connector was constructed by Trail Crew as an RTP project. The remaining trail will be constructed when DelDOT and Salt Pond development agree on the trail location on the development side of the road. Portions of Fresh Pond are restricted due to the deposition of dredged soils from the Assawoman Canal dredging project.
- New trail system data including UTAP data is being collected for all trails in Delaware. A summary from the State Parks Trail Inventory is listed.
  - 147 miles of trail system in Delaware State Parks
  - 95 miles in New Castle County
  - 44 miles in Sussex County
  - 8 miles Kent County
  - 57 miles single use trails for pedestrian only
  - 90 miles available for shared-use, hiking, biking, pedestrian, and equestrian
  - 97 miles of trails classified as double track, 36 inches or greater in width
  - 50 miles of trails classified as single track
  - Single tracks will make way for double tracks as the demand for trails increases

#### Assawoman Canal

Bob Ehemann, Grants & Community Coordinator: The PowerPoint presentation is based on the Assawoman Canal lands and the start up of a community-based working group that supports trail development along the Canal:

- The communities of Bethany Beach, South Bethany and Ocean View submitted a DTF grant application for a pathway conceptual plan along the canal. An initial meeting with officials from these communities as well as Sea Colony, Bahamas Beach Cottages and State Park staff revealed some common interest among stakeholders:

- To build a sustainable meandering pedestrian and bike pathway along both sides of the canal and this must be kept as natural as possible.
- Fencing or natural vegetative buffers are necessary for adjacent landowners.
- Landscaping with native vegetation and removal of non-natives.
- Uniform surfacing throughout pathway with benches and signage.
- The canal was dug in the 1880s as part of a plan for a 70-mile inland waterway from Chincoteague Bay in Virginia to the Delaware Bay at Lewes. The Canal is a scenic waterway that connects White Creek, a tributary of Indian River Bay, and Little Assawoman Bay. It was abandoned in 1905 and last dredged in the 1950s.
- In 1990, DNREC acquired the Canal from the US Army Corps of Engineers with the purpose of creating a linear recreational trail system within the right-of-way. Delaware Seashores State Park manages the Canal. In 1995, a trail concept plan was drafted but never released to the public.
- The Canal is approximately 4-miles long and 210-feet wide. The physical canal width varies with approximately 110-feet from bank to bank leaving 50-feet of upland on either side of the canal. The Corp identified a restricted area based on the first landward 20-feet from the high tide mark on each side to be maintained as a vegetative buffer (shading helps maintain cooler water temperatures).
- In 2008, the Division acquired a small property with funds from the Federal Recreational Trail Program and State Open Space. The property is located adjacent to Route 26 and will serve as a trail head.

The current canal dredging project is expected to be completed by January 2010. Parks & Recreation will notify adjacent property owners of any encroachments, including docks and piers, which must be removed by December 31, 2009.

Future public workshops will be hosted by community partners that will provide a framework for the Conceptual Trail Plan addressing access, circulation, opportunities, constraints, buffers and identifying overlooks, rest areas, kiosk information and spur connections. Parks & Recreation's graphic staff is preparing photographic and sketched trail renderings to be used in workshops and trail concept plans.

#### Recreational Trail Program

The Delaware State Park Trail Crew consists of two full time members and one seasonal member. A staff person is employed to collect trail data for the Trail Inventory and UTAP.

- A trail crew is currently working at Burton Island and also spent a good portion of 2008 reconstructing trails at Lums Pond State Park.
- A new bike/ped bridge on the Pomeroy Trail is under construction in White Clay Creek State Park. This is an essential connection between the upper trail segments and the trail into Newark and University of Delaware campus. While there are no Recreation Trail funds for the bridge, the Parks & Recreation will request an amendment to its Work Plan to include unforeseen expenses associated with the bridge and power lines within the project alignment. RTP funds are earmarked for a new trail head just south of the bridge site.
- Several DR mowers will be purchased with RTP funds for trail maintenance and allocated to two state parks.
- Division of Forestry has requested \$10,000 in RTP funds for trail maintenance. Susan will develop a Project Agreement. Funds for state and federal agencies with trail responsibility are earmarked in the Work Plan.
- The Division entered into a License Agreement with Maryland Mass Transit Authority for the 13.5-mile long Clayton-Easton rail-line property. The Division proposes this for rail trail development. Maryland MTA is requiring DE to provide

insurance prior to any trail engineering. Delaware is self-insured. MTA would not accept this condition and required a real policy be signed. This action is pending.

- Susan and David attended the State Trail Administrators meeting and the National Trails Symposium in November 2008 in Little Rock, Arkansas. At that meeting Christopher Douwes, FHWA DC, recommended that all states have RTP Stewardship and Project Agreements similar to Tennessee's. Agreements define roles of state and federal agencies in the RTP administration.
- FHWA Delmar Office drafted and reviewed a Stewardship Agreement for DE. The agreement is not yet finalized.
- RTP is developing a new projects list.

#### Other Business

Lisa Lasher, six year Council member and even longer time Council volunteer, was presented with a framed print in appreciation for her dedication. Ms. Wilson read a Governor's Tribute signed by former Governor Ruth Ann Minner.

- Next Council meeting is June 3, 2009 at Dover Public Archives, 9:30AM.
- Meeting adjourned at 11:37 a.m.

Respectively submitted: Rose Ryödi

#### **Meeting Attendance:**

##### **Appointed Members**

Charles Emerson  
Deborah M. Heaton  
James Ireland  
Peggy Koster  
Lisa Lasher  
Diane Wilson

##### **Agency Members**

Austin Short, DOA

##### **Guests**

##### **Division of Parks and Recreation Staff**

David Bartoo  
Matt Chessser  
Bob Ehemann  
Beth Emerson  
Mike Krumrine  
Susan Moerschel  
Kendall Sommers